

# out of the silence

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **New Web Site Urges Teens to Step “Out of the Silence”**

**New Jersey teenager hopes new initiative will help teens with mental illness**

**BRIDGEWATER, NJ** – Out of the Silence, a new web-based non-profit organization (<http://stepoutofthesilence.org/>) that aims to offer a safe venue in which young people with mental health problem can express their emotions through artwork, prose, poetry, photography, and graphic art, will be launched on September 9 to coincide with National Suicide Prevention Week. The initiative and web site was created by 16 year-old Caitlin Carey of New Jersey to assist teens dealing with mental health problems but who feel they have no place to express their thoughts and feelings.

“It’s no secret that thousands of teens today suffer in silence, not knowing where they can voice their concerns and experiences with mental illness,” said Caitlin Carey, founder of the project. “Young people tend to rely on their peers for support in everyday situations. However, the stigma attached to mental illness makes it difficult to reach out to friends; so many teenagers who are trying to cope with an illness such as depression or anxiety feel isolated.”

Carey, who has struggled with obsessive-compulsive disorder for nearly a decade, added, “I felt like I was the only girl in the world who experienced these horrible emotions and isolation. No one should have to feel the way I did.”

Carey’s hope is that Out of the Silence will provide a community of advocates for teenagers dealing with mental illness. She plans to eventually hold empowering events such as sponsored writing and art contests.

“While there are many networking opportunities available for adults with mental health disorders, there are very few resources that are targeted and accessible to young people who are suffering,” added Carey. “I felt the time was right for me and my peers to become more vocal and proactive in the fight against the stigma associated with mental illness. Our voice has to count.”

“Caitlin Carey’s commitment to fighting the stigma surrounding mental health issues is truly remarkable. Her courageous efforts will no doubt help countless teens and young adults navigate the many challenges of living with mental illness,” said Jeff Bell, author

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of *Rewind, Replay, Repeat: A Memoir of Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder* and advocate for mental health. "The mental health community is most fortunate to have Caitlin join its ranks!"

To learn more about the web site and Caitlin, visit us at <http://stepoutofthesilence.org/>.

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